<u>IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE</u>

In re the Application of:	Atty. Docket No.: 003797.00023
Jonathan C. KAGLE et al.	
Serial No.: 09/809,058	Group Art Unit: 2178
Filed: March 16, 2001	Examiner: Schlaifer, J.
For: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR SYNCHRONIZING MULTIPLE VERSIONS OF DIGITAL DATA	Confirmation No.: 4681

<u>RESPONSE TO NOTIFICATION OF NON-COMPLIANT APPEAL BRIEF</u>

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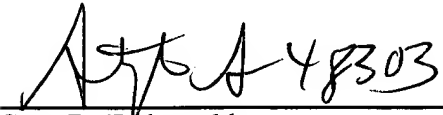401 Dulany Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Sir:

In response to the Notification of Non-Compliant Appeal Brief ("Notification") dated May 19, 2006, Applicants hereby submit a substitute Appeal Brief correcting the alleged omissions cited in the Notification. This paper and the substitute Appeal Brief are being filed within one month of the mailing date of the Notification.

It is believed that no fee is due. However, if any fees are required or if an overpayment is made, the Commissioner is authorized to debit or credit our Deposit Account No. 19-0733, accordingly.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: June 2, 2006

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SUBSTITUTE APPEAL BRIEF

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Sir:

This is an Appeal Brief in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 41.37 in support of appellants' March 2, 2005 Notice of Appeal. Appeal is taken from the Final Office Action mailed December 2, 2004, and the Advisory Action mailed March 1, 2005. Please charge any necessary fees in connection with this Appeal Brief to our Deposit Account No. 19-0733.

REAL PARTY IN INTEREST
37 C.F.R. § 41.37(c)(1)(i)

The owner of this application, and the real party in interest, is Microsoft Corporation.

RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES
37 C.F.R. § 41.37(c)(1)(ii)

There are no related appeals and interferences.

STATUS OF CLAIMS
37 C.F.R. § 41.37(c)(1)(iii)

Claims 7-9, 22-24, 32-51 and 53 are rejected, claims 1-6, 10-21, 25-31, 52 and 54-58 are canceled. Only pending claims 7-9, 22-24, 32-51 and 53 are shown in the attached appendix.

Appellants hereby appeal the rejection of claims 7-9, 22-24, 32-51 and 53.

STATUS OF AMENDMENTS
37 C.F.R. § 41.37(c)(1)(iv)

The Amendment After Final Rejection filed January 28, 2005 which is responsive to the final Office Action of December 2, 2004, has been entered and all prior amendments have been entered. In a telephonic interview, the Examiner agreed that the rejection of claim 38 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 had been overcome by the aforementioned Amendment After Final. Interview Summary, paper no. 20050301 mailed March 7, 2005.

SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER
37 C.F.R. § 41.37(c)(1)(v)

In making reference herein to various portions of the specification and drawings in order to explain the claimed invention, Appellants do not intend to limit the claims; all references to the specification and drawings are illustrative unless otherwise explicitly stated.

Independent claims 7 and 22 are directed to synchronizing multiple versions of an object (*Specification*, p. 1, line 2, and p. 8, lines 14-17, and p. 17, line 20, FIG. 6). The method comprises receiving a multimedia object having an associated unique identifier, metadata and history (Specification, p. 9, lines 16-20, p. 10, lines 4-6, p. 11, lines 13-16, FIG. 6, Step S5); assigning a new unique identifier to the multimedia object responsive to the multimedia object being modified (Specification, p. 10, lines 5-19, FIG. 6, Step S6); and updating the metadata and history of the multimedia object to include a node corresponding to the new unique identifier and

a vector (Specification, p. 10, lines 20-22) describing, via the metadata, the modification performed to arrive at the multimedia object corresponding to the new unique identifier (Specification, p. 9, line 20 – p. 10, line 2, p. 11, lines 1-2, p. 14, lines 16-17).

Dependent claims 8 and 23 recite that the method includes storing the associated unique identifier, the new unique identifier, the metadata and the history (Specification, p. 12, lines 5-17, p. 15, lines 17-18, FIG. 6, Step S9, p. 16, line 21 – p. 17, line 6). In addition, the method may include tracking the history of the multimedia object via the associated unique identifier, the new unique identifier, the metadata and the history (Specification, p. 14, lines 4-9, p. 15, lines 7-16)

Dependent claims 9 and 24 recite that the metadata describes how the multimedia object differs from the modified multimedia object (Specification, p. 10, line 21 – p. 11, lines 12).

Independent claim 32 is directed to a method for synchronizing multiple versions of an object (*Specification*, p. 1, line 2, and p. 8, lines 14-17, and p. 17, line 20, FIG. 6), comprising assigning a multimedia object a first unique identifier (Specification, p. 10, lines 5-19, FIG. 6, Step S6); providing the multimedia object a history having a node representing the first unique identifier of the multimedia object (Specification, p. 11, lines 13-14); responsive to the multimedia object being modified, assigning the modified multimedia object a second unique identifier (Specification, p. 15, lines 1-6); and updating the history to include a node representing the second unique identifier of the multimedia object and to associate the node representing the first unique identifier to the node representing the second unique identifier (Specification, p. 11, lines 13-19, FIG. 2)

Dependent claim 34 is directed to the method in which the metadata describes how the multimedia object differs from the modified multimedia object (Specification, p. 10, lines 20-22).

Dependent claim 35 is directed to the method in which the modification describes the modification applied to the multimedia object to obtain the modified multimedia object (Specification, p. 11, lines 1-2, p. 14, lines 10-21).

Dependent claim 40 is directed to the method including associating metadata with the vector (Specification, p. 11, lines 14-16), the metadata describing the modification applied to the multimedia object to obtain the modified multimedia object (Specification, p. 11, lines 1-2, p. 14, lines 10-21).

Dependent claim 45 is directed to the method wherein only the recent history is stored with the modified multimedia object (Specification, p. 11 – p. 12, line 12)

Dependent claim 47 is directed to the method wherein only the recent history is transferred with the modified multimedia object (Specification, p. 11, line 22-p. 12, line 2)

Dependent claim 50 is directed to the method further including assigning the modified multimedia object a second unique identifier, generating the second unique identifier by one of hashing and cyclic redundancy checking of data representing the modified multimedia object (Specification, p. 10, lines 6-8; p. 15, lines 1-6).

GROUNDS OF REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL
37 C.F.R. § 41.37(c)(1)(vi)

Claims 7-9, 22-24, 32-44, 46, 48-49, 51 and 53 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over the combination of U.S. patent no. 5,535,322 to <u>Hecht</u> in view of U.S.

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patent no. 5,335,320 to Iwata et al. ("Iwata") and U.S. patent no. 5,874,955 to Rogowitz et al. ("Rogowitz").

Claims 45 and 47 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over the combination of Hecht in view of Iwata, further in view of Rogowitz, and further in view of U.S. patent no. 5,519,865 to Kondo et al. ("Kondo").

Claim 50 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over the combination of Hecht in view of Iwata, further in view of Rogowitz, and further in view of U.S. patent no. 5,781,635 to Chan et al. ("Chan").

ARGUMENT
37 C.F.R. § 41.37(c)(1)(vii)

A. Claims 7-9, 22-24, 32, 33, 36-39, 41-44, 46, 48, 49, 51, and 53 are Not Obvious Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), over Hecht in view of Iwata and Rogowitz.

Claim 7 recites a method for synchronizing multiple versions of an object comprising receiving a multimedia object having an associated unique identifier, metadata and history; assigning a new unique identifier to the multimedia object responsive to the multimedia object being modified; and updating the metadata and history of the multimedia object to include a node corresponding to the new unique identifier and a vector describing, via the metadata, the modification performed to arrive at the multimedia object corresponding to the new unique identifier.

Hecht discloses a method of work flow management (*Hecht*, col. 1, lines 8-11) in which a "work process" (*Hecht*, col. 2, lines 35-44) is controlled centrally to dispatch work to various services (*Hecht*, col. 2. lines 50-55). In Hecht, tax information is received from a taxpayer, and an image of the information from the taxpayer is captured (i.e., scanned) and stored (e.g., *Hecht*,

col. 8, lines 34-46). The data is processed to create and store a Tax Data Record (TDR) based on

the received tax information (*Hecht*, col. 8, lines 61-62). After processing is complete, the TDR

is archived. Nowhere does Hecht teach or suggest assigning a new unique identifier to a

multimedia object responsive to the multimedia object being modified.

The final Office Action admits that Hecht fails to teach or suggest assigning a new

unique identifier to the multimedia object responsive to the multimedia object being modified

but contends that it is "inherent to modification so that the modified items can be identified."

Final Office Action, December 2, 2004, p. 4, lines 5-7. However, the final Office Action applies

an improper standard in evaluating inherency. The fact that a certain result or characteristic may

occur in the prior art is not sufficient to establish the inherency of that result or characteristic. In

re Rijckaert, 9 F.3d 1531, 1534, 28 USPQ2d 1955, 1957 (Fed. Cir. 1993); In re Oelrich, 666 F.2d

578, 581-82, 212 USPQ 323, 326 (CCPA 1981) (holding that "to establish inherency, the

extrinsic evidence must make clear that the missing descriptive matter is necessarily present in

the thing described in the reference, and that it would be so recognized by persons of ordinary

skill. Inherency, however, may not be established by probabilities or possibilities. The mere fact

that a certain thing may result from a given set of circumstances is not sufficient") (emphasis

added).

Furthermore, "in relying upon the theory of inherency, the examiner must provide a basis

in fact and/or technical reasoning to reasonably support the determination that the allegedly

inherent characteristic necessarily flows from the teachings of the applied prior art." Ex parte

Levy, 17 USPQ2d 1461, 1464 (Bd. Pat. App & Inter. 1990) (emphasis in the original). As

admitted by the final Office Action, Hecht fails to teach or suggest assigning a new unique

identifier to a multimedia object responsive to the multimedia object being modified. In fact, Hecht fails to teach or suggest modification of the multimedia object at all. Even assuming *arguendo* that Hecht *might* modify a multimedia object and that Hecht *might* assign a new unique identifier responsive to the object being modified, such possibilities are still insufficient to establish inherency. The Office Action has failed to provide a basis in fact and/or technical reasoning to support the assertion that assigning a new unique identifier to a multimedia object responsive to the multimedia object being modified necessarily flows from the Hecht disclosure of scanning tax information received from a taxpayer, processing and archiving the data. Indeed, nowhere does Hecht suggest the need for modification at all and even if Hecht were to modify a multimedia object, a new unique identifier would not need to be assigned. For example, a time stamp or other history type data may be associated with the object such that the identifier remains the same. Alternatively, the modified object may replace the unmodified object and assume the identifier of the unmodified object thus obviating any need to assign a new unique identifier.

The Office Action further admits that Hecht fails to teach or suggest "updating the metadata and history of the multimedia object to include a node corresponding to the new unique identifier and a vector describing, via the metadata, the modification performed to arrive at the multimedia object corresponding to the new unique identifier" as recited in claim 7 but asserts that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Hecht with the disclosures of Iwata or Rogowitz to arrive at the claim 7 combination of features. However, contrary to the Office Action's assertions, there is no motivation to combine the cited references

and even assuming *arguendo* that one of ordinary skill in the art would have combined the cited references, one of ordinary skill in the art would still not have arrived at the claim 7 invention.

The Office Action asserts that even though Hecht fails to teach or suggest assigning a new unique identifier to a multimedia object responsive to the multimedia object being modified, Iwata, at col. 8, lines 55-67, cures this deficiency. However, contrary to the Office Action's assertions, Iwata fails to cure the deficiency of Hecht.

Iwata merely discloses addition of information of an element for a Graphical User Interface (GUI) to an edit manager responsive to an ADD command and setting a unique identifier for the GUI element to be added (i.e., the same GUI element). Thus, setting the unique identifier for the GUI element is not responsive to modification of a multimedia object. Indeed, setting the unique identifier for the GUI element is not responsive to modification of anything at all. Rather, the unique identifier is assigned to elements to be added (not modified elements). Merely adding a new GUI element to an edit manager and assigning the new element a unique identifier does not provide a teaching or suggestion of assigning a new unique identifier to a multimedia object responsive to the multimedia object being modified as recited in claim 7.

Likewise, Rogowitz does not cure this deficiency of Hecht and Iwata. Nor does the Office Action assert that Rogowitz cures this deficiency. Because neither Hecht and Iwata, nor Rogowitz, either alone or in combination, teach or suggest assigning a new unique identifier to the multimedia object responsive to the multimedia object being modified, the rejection is improper and should be reversed.

Additionally, the Office Action asserts that even though Hecht (or Iwata) fails to teach or suggest updating the metadata and history graph of the multimedia object to include a node

corresponding to the new unique identifier and a vector describing, via the metadata, the modification performed to arrive at the multimedia object corresponding to the new unique identifier as recited in claim 7, Rogowitz (at col. 20, lines 55-65) supposedly makes up for this deficiency in both Hecht and Iwata. However, contrary to the Office Action's assertions, Rogowitz fails to cure the deficiencies in Hecht and/or Iwata.

Rogowitz discloses, at col. 20, lines 55-65, the capacity to change metadata. Although Rogowitz appears to disclose the term "metadata" in the context of "changing" (inferred to be "updating" by the Office Action), Rogowitz still fails to teach or suggest updating the history of a multimedia object. Indeed, Rogowitz fails to teach or suggest a history of a multimedia object at all. Also, Rogowitz fails to teach or suggest including a node corresponding to the new unique identifier as recited in claim 7. Moreover, Rogowitz fails to teach or suggest describing, via the metadata, the modification performed to arrive at the multimedia object corresponding to the new unique identifier. Indeed, the Office Action relies on Rogowitz solely to provide the disclosure that "metadata" may be changed, however, Rogowitz fails to teach or suggest updating the history of a multimedia object, including a node corresponding to the new unique identifier, or describing, via the metadata, the modification performed to arrive at the multimedia object corresponding to the new unique identifier. The Office Action fails to address these deficiencies in Rogowitz. Thus, neither Hecht and Iwata, nor Rogowitz, either alone or in combination teach or suggest claim 7. The rejection should be reversed.

Also, there is no motivation to combine the Hecht, Iwata and Rogowitz as the Office Action contends. "There are three possible sources for a motivation to combine references: the nature of the problem to be solved, the teachings of the prior art, and the knowledge of persons

of ordinary skill in the art." *In re Rouffet*, 149 F.3d 1350, 1357, 47 USPQ2d 1453, 1457-58 (Fed. Cir. 1998).

The Office Action asserts that one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to modify the Hecht disclosure by incorporating the Iwata disclosure because doing so would "help manage the identity of objects." *Final Office Action* issued December 2, 2004, page 4, line 15. Thus, the Office Action asserts that one of ordinary skill in the art would have managed work flow services by receiving tax information from a taxpayer, scanning the tax information, processing the data, then posting and archiving the data according to Hecht, then additionally modifying the tax data received from the taxpayer and assigning a new unique identifier to the modified tax data responsive to the modification of the tax data based on the disclosure of Iwata who discloses providing a Graphical User Interface (GUI) element to a GUI editor and assigning an identifier to a GUI elements added to the GUI editor. Notably, the Office Action fails to assert a motivation why one of ordinary skill in the art given the Hecht disclosure would have modified the tax data at all as set forth in the action.

The purported motivation for one of ordinary skill in the art to perform such a modification or combination, according to the Office Action, is to "help manage the identity of objects." However, Hecht fails to teach or suggest modification of the tax data received from the taxpayer, and does not provide any disclosure of a need to additionally "manage the identity of the objects" as the final Office Action appears to contend. Also, Iwata discloses assigning a unique identifier to a GUI element to be added to a GUI editor. This disclosure does not relate to processing tax data received from a taxpayer or controlling a work flow process.

The final Office Action further asserts that one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to modify the Hecht disclosure by incorporating the Rogowitz disclosure "in order to track changes in the metadata." *Final Office Action* dated December 4, 2004, page 4, lines 21-22. However, Hecht does not disclose a need or desire to "track changes in the metadata". Indeed, the disclosure in Hecht of managing a workflow process and storing state and other attributes of work objects does not pertain to metadata or changes to the metadata and does not provide or suggest any need or desire to "track changes in the metadata" as the final Office Action asserts. At best, the final Office Action has hunted through the prior art in an effort to find the elements without any suggestion or motivation to combine the references containing the elements, thereby engaging in impermissible hindsight. In sum, one skilled in the art would not have combined Hecht, Iwata and Rogowitz to obtain the claim 7 combination of features.

Claim 22 is directed to a computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the same steps as recited in the method of claim 7. Thus, claim 22 is patentably distinguishable over the applied combination for the same reasons as claim 7.

Claim 32 is similar to claim 7 in calling for, among other features, responsive to the multimedia object being modified, assigning the modified multimedia object a second unique identifier; and updating the history to include a node representing the second unique identifier of the multimedia object and to associate the node representing the first unique identifier to the node representing the second unique identifier. To the extent the features of independent claim 32 are similar to claim 7, claim 32 is patentably distinguishable from the combination of Hecht, Iwata and Rogowitz for substantially the same reasons set forth above.

Claims 8, 9, 23, 24, 33, 36-39, 41-44, 46, 48, 49, 51, and 53 depend from claim 7, 22, or

32 and are patentably distinguishable from the combination of Hecht, Iwata and Rogowitz for at

least substantially the same reasons set forth above.

B. Claim 34 is Not Obvious Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), Over Hecht in view of Iwata and Rogowitz.

Claim 34 recites all of the features of claim 32 and is patentably distinct from the

combination of Hecht, Iwata and Rogowitz for the same reasons set forth above. Also, claim 34

recites that the metadata describes how the multimedia object differs from the modified

multimedia object. The Office Action asserts that Hecht discloses at col. 17, lines 50-65 that the

system keeps multiple versions in storage associated with the primary version for comparison

and concludes that this alleged disclosure is equivalent to metadata describing how the

multimedia object differs from the modified multimedia object. However, Hecht merely

describes storing a previous version of a tax data record, which is not metadata. Moreover,

merely storing a version of a tax data record does not provide any information as to how the tax

data record differs from any other version of the tax data record. Neither Iwata nor Rogowitz

remedy this defect of Hecht. As such, the combination of Hecht, Iwata and Rogowitz does not

result in the claim 34 invention where the metadata describes how the multimedia object differs

from the modified multimedia object. Thus, the rejection should be reversed.

C. Claims 35 and 40 are Not Obvious, Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), Over Hecht in view of Iwata and Rogowitz.

Claims 35 and 40 recite all of the features of claim 32 and are patentably distinct from the

combination of Hecht, Iwata and Rogowitz for the same reasons set forth above with respect to

claim 32. Also, claims 35 and 40 recite that the metadata describes the modification applied to

the multimedia object to obtain the modified multimedia object. The Office Action asserts that Hecht discloses at col. 17, lines 50-65 that the system keeps multiple versions in storage associated with the primary version for comparison and concludes that this alleged disclosure is equivalent to metadata describing the modification applied to the multimedia object to obtain the modified multimedia object. However, Hecht merely describes storing a previous version of a tax data record, which is not metadata. Moreover, merely storing a version of a tax data record, even assuming *arguendo* that one of ordinary skill in the art assumed the tax data record to be "metadata," does not describe the modification applied to the tax data record to obtain a modified tax data record. Neither Iwata nor Rogowitz remedy this further defect of Hecht. As such, the combination of Hecht, Iwata and Rogowitz does not result in the invention of claim 35 or claim 40. Thus, the rejection should be reversed.

D. Claims 45 and 47 are Not Obvious, Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), Over Hecht in view of Iwata and Rogowitz and further in view of Kondo.

Claims 45 and 47 recite all of the features of claim 32 and are patentably distinct from the combination of Hecht, Iwata and Rogowitz for the same reasons set forth above with respect to claim 32. Also, claims 45 and 47 recite that only the recent history is stored with the modified multimedia object. The Office Action admits that none of Hecht, Iwata, or Rogowitz teaches or suggests that only the recent history is stored with the modified multimedia object. To remedy this defect, the Action relies on Kondo at col. 6, lines 5-35. However, Kondo fails to cure the deficiencies of Hecht, Iwata and Rogowitz as the Office Action contends.

Kondo discloses a method for retrieving files from a database. A user enters commands into the system (Kondo, col. 5, lines 57-60) which may generate conditions for retrieving a group of files from the database (Kondo, col. 6, lines 14-17). The retrieval conditions are stored

(Kondo, col. 6, lines 18-19) and are subsequently displayed if the CALL HISTORY button 21c is clicked (Kondo, col. 6, lines 22-25). Based on the retrieval conditions, a group of files is displayed to a "notice group" (Kondo, col. 6, lines 26-27). At the time of the updated display of the retrieved group of files, the selected retrieval condition is "stored as the most recent history information" (Kondo, col. 6, lines 28-31). Hence, contrary to the Office Action's assertions, Kondo fails to teach or suggest that only the recent history is stored with the modified multimedia object. Kondo fails to teach or suggest a modified multimedia object at all. Rather, Kondo discloses retrieving a group of files (not modifying them) based on a retrieval condition, displaying the retrieved group of files to a "notice group" and storing the selected retrieval condition.

Moreover, there is no motivation to modify the combination of Hecht, Iwata and Rogowitz with Kondo. The Office Action asserts that the motivation (to combine these references) is "to use selective storage of recent history" to "provide the user with access to more relevant history information." *Final Office Action* dated December 4, 2004, page 9, line 23 – page 10, line 2. The Office Action's contention is illogical because a user provided with all relevant history information would not have had any less access to "more relevant history information" as compared to a user provided with only "recent history." In other words, one possessing all relevant history information who desired "more relevant history information" would not have been motivated to limit access to only "recent history" and forego access to all other history information. Indeed, restricting access to history information would only serve to provide *less* relevant history information. As such, one skilled in the art would not have been

motivated to combine <u>Kondo</u> with <u>Hecht</u>, <u>Iwata</u> and <u>Rogowitz</u> as alleged. Thus, the rejection should be reversed.

E. Claim 50 is Not Obvious, Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), Over Hecht in view of Iwata and Rogowitz and further in view of Chan.

Claim 50 recites all of the features of claim 32 and is patentably distinct from the combination of <u>Hecht</u>, <u>Iwata</u> and <u>Rogowitz</u> for the same reasons set forth above with respect to claim 32. Also, claim 50 recites generating the second unique identifier by one of hashing and cyclic redundancy checking of data representing the modified multimedia object. The Office Action admits that the combination of <u>Hecht</u>, <u>Iwata</u> and <u>Rogowitz</u> fails to teach or suggest generating the second unique identifier by one of hashing and cyclic redundancy checking of data representing the modified multimedia object. To remedy this defect, the Office Action relies on <u>Chan</u> at col. 2, lines 60-67. However, contrary to the Office Action's assertions, <u>Chan</u> fails to cure the deficiencies of <u>Hecht</u>, <u>Iwata</u> and <u>Rogowitz</u>.
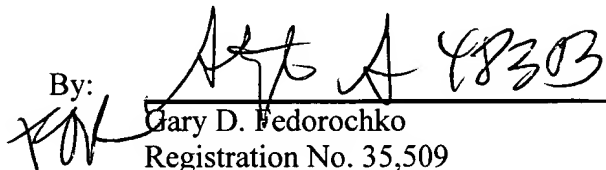
<u>Chan</u> discloses at col. 2, lines 60-67 that generating an identifier for a digital message by a one-way hash function. However, <u>Chan</u> fails to teach or suggest generating a unique identifier for a modified multimedia object. The Office Action asserts that "using hashing" is "an accepted part of using digital signature." *Final Office Action* dated December 4, 2004, page 10, lines 17-18. Nonetheless even assuming this contention to be true, it does not logically follow that "using hashing" is therefore an "accepted part" of a modified multimedia object. For at least this reason, the combination of <u>Hecht</u>, <u>Iwata</u>, <u>Rogowitz</u> and <u>Chan</u> does not result in the claim 50 invention. Thus, the rejection should be reversed.

<u>CONCLUSION</u>

For all of the foregoing reasons, Appellants respectfully submit that the final rejection of

claims 7-9, 22-24, 32-51 and 53 is improper and should be reversed.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: June 2, 2006

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CLAIMS APPENDIX
37 C.F.R. § 41.37(c)(1)(viii)

7.   A method for synchronizing multiple versions of an object, comprising:

receiving a multimedia object having an associated unique identifier, metadata and history;

assigning a new unique identifier to the multimedia object responsive to the multimedia object being modified;

updating the metadata and history of the multimedia object to include a node corresponding to the new unique identifier and a vector describing, via the metadata, the modification performed to arrive at the multimedia object corresponding to the new unique identifier.

8.   The method according to claim 7, further comprising:

storing the associated unique identifier, the new unique identifier, the metadata and the history.

9.   The method according to claim 8, further comprising:

tracking the history of the multimedia object via the associated unique identifier, the new unique identifier, the metadata and the history.

22.   A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the steps of:

receiving a multimedia object having an associated unique identifier, metadata and history;

assigning a new unique identifier to the multimedia object responsive to the multimedia object being modified;

updating the metadata and history of the multimedia object to include a node corresponding to the new unique identifier and a vector describing, via the metadata, the modification performed to arrive at the multimedia object corresponding to the new unique identifier.

23.   The computer-readable medium according to claim 22, having further computer-executable instructions for performing the steps of:

storing the associated unique identifier, the new unique identifier, the metadata and the history.

24.   The computer-readable medium according to claim 23, having further computer-executable instructions for performing the steps of:

tracking the history of the multimedia object via the associated unique identifier, the new unique identifier, the metadata and the history.

32.   A method for synchronizing multiple versions of an object, comprising:

assigning a multimedia object a first unique identifier;

providing the multimedia object a history having a node representing the first unique identifier of the multimedia object;

responsive to the multimedia object being modified, assigning the modified multimedia object a second unique identifier; and

updating the history to include a node representing the second unique identifier of the multimedia object and to associate the node representing the first unique identifier to the node representing the second unique identifier.

33.   The method according to claim 32, further comprising associating metadata with the modified multimedia object.

34.   The method according to claim 33, wherein the metadata describes how the multimedia object differs from the modified multimedia object.

35.   The method according to claim 33, wherein the metadata describes the modification applied to the multimedia object to obtain the modified multimedia object.

36.   The method according to claim 32, further comprising storing the first and second unique identifiers in a database separate from the multimedia object and the modified multimedia object.

37. The method according to claim 32, further comprising storing the first and second unique identifiers with the multimedia object and the modified multimedia object, respectively.

38. An operating system stored on a computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the steps of the method of claim 32.

39. The method according to claim 32, wherein updating the history includes creating a vector that describes the relationship between the multimedia object associated with the first unique identifier and the modified multimedia object associated with the second unique identifier.

40. The method according to claim 39, further comprising associating metadata with the vector, the metadata describing the modification applied to the multimedia object to obtain the modified multimedia object.

41. The method according to claim 32, further comprising receiving the multimedia object prior to assigning the first unique identifier to the multimedia object.

42. The method according to claim 32, wherein the multimedia object is an image.

43. The method according to claim 42, wherein the history represents evolution of the image.

44. The method according to claim 32, further comprising storing portions of the history with the modified multimedia object.

45. The method according to claim 44, wherein only the recent history is stored with the modified multimedia object.

46. The method according to claim 32, further comprising transferring the history with the modified multimedia object.

47. The method according to claim 46, wherein only the recent history is transferred with the modified multimedia object.

48.   The method according to claim 32, further comprising providing an application program interface for other software to retrieve or store the multimedia object or the modified multimedia object.

49.   The method according to claim 48, wherein the application program interface is configured to receive metadata associated with the multimedia object or the modified multimedia object.

50.   The method according to claim 32, wherein assigning the modified multimedia object a second unique identifier includes generating the second unique identifier by one of hashing and cyclic redundancy checking of data representing the modified multimedia object.

51.   The method according to claim 32, further comprising associating the updated history with the modified multimedia object.

53.   A computer readable medium having computer executable instructions stored for performing the method of claim 32.